

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 7991

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SEVN, IS, JO
SUBJECT: PROPOSED KANTOR VISIT; ISRAELI REQUEST FOR HARZA REPORT

REFS: (A) STATE 286713; (B) AMMAN 6921; (C) TEL AVIV 7800;
(D) STATE 281812; (E) STATE 276051

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH MOSHE ALON, DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, MFA, ON NOVEMBER 24, ECON COUNSELOR ASKED IF DECISION HAD BEEN MADE ON PROPOSED VISIT OF WATER COMMISSIONER KANTOR TO WASHINGTON. ALON REPLIED IN NEGATIVE, EXPLAINING THAT "KANTOR WOULD HAVE NOTHING TO CONTRIBUTE UNTIL HE IS TOLD PARAMETERS OF PROBLEM." ALON ADDED THAT THIS IS WHY THEY ASKED TO SEE THE HARZA REPORT. AFTER READING THE REPORT, HE SAID, KANTOR WOULD BE IN POSITION TO "CONDUCT MEANINGFUL DISCUSSIONS" WITH U.S. OFFICIALS. ALON SAID HE WOULD PERSONALLY GUARANTEE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO LEAK TO PRESS IF ISRAELIS WERE PERMITTED TO READ THE REPORT. HE WAS NON-COMMITTAL WHEN ASKED WHETHER A WRITTEN SUMMARY OF THE REPORT WOULD SATISFY THEIR NEEDS, AND SIMPLY REITERATED THAT SUBJECT IS OF SUCH EXTREME SENSITIVITY TO GOI THAT THEY MUST INSIST ON BEING BROUGHT FULLY INTO PICTURE.

2. COMMENT: FROM ALON'S REACTION WE DOUBT THAT
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ISRAELIS WILL SETTLE EVEN FOR WRITTEN SUMMARY OF

HARZA REPORT. THEY WANT TO SEE THE FULL DOCUMENT. ONE APPROACH, OF COURSE, WOULD BE TO WAIT UNTIL OUR "IN HOUSE" WATER RIGHTS STUDY IS COMPLETED AT END OF DECEMBER BEFORE WE HAVE ANY EXCHANGE WITH THE ISRAELIS. ANOTHER, WHICH WE FAVOR, IS TO PERMIT AN ISRAELI EMBASSY OFFICER, OR ALON HERE, TO READ THE REPORT IN PRESENCE OF A U.S. OFFICIAL. KEEPING THE REPORT FROM THEM WILL SIMPLY HEIGHTEN ALREADY EXISTING SUSPICIONS THAT SOMETHING IS GOING ON THEY SHOULD KNOW ABOUT, AND WILL MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN THEIR ESSENTIAL COOPERATION AT A LATER STAGE.
TOON

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